

DOCTORATE RECIPIENTS FROM UNITED STATES UNIVERSITIES: SUMMARY REPORT 1998

Introduction

Doctorate Recipients from United States Universities: Summary Report 1998 is the thirty-second in a series of reports on research doctorates awarded by colleges and universities in the United States.¹ The data presented in this report are from the annual Survey of Earned Doctorates (SED), a census of research doctoral recipients who earned their degrees between July 1, 1997, and June 30, 1998. This survey, conducted since 1958, is sponsored by five Federal agencies: the National Science Foundation, the National Institutes of Health, the National Endowment for the Humanities, the U.S. Department of Education, and the U.S. Department of Agriculture. All survey responses become part of the Doctorate Records File (DRF), a virtually complete database on doctorate recipients from 1920 to 1998.

The overall response rate for the 1998 survey was 91.5 percent.² In a few item areas, missing data could affect the reliability of the conclusions; those items are indicated explicitly when they occur. Please consult the “Important Notice” on page vii for further details.

Organization

Summary Report 1998 begins by reviewing overall trends in research doctorates awarded by U.S. universities and continues by discussing trends in the seven broad fields in which research doctorate recipients earn their degrees. Trends in doctorate awards by sex, race/ethnicity, and citizenship are described next, and the report concludes with discussion of time-to-degree statistics, sources of financial support during graduate school, and the postgraduation status and plans of doctorate recipients at the time the degree is awarded.

A detailed profile of the indebtedness reported by doctorate recipients follows the main report. This special section assesses indebtedness by race/ethnicity, institution type, and citizenship, as well as examining the relationship between indebtedness and sources of support, postgraduation status, and such demographic factors as marital status and number of dependents. The tabulations in this section are limited, for the most part, to U.S. citizens, because their data on indebtedness are relevant to Federal policies on graduate financial aid.

Figures displaying selected trend data accompany the brief narratives of key survey findings. The numbers and percentages from which the figures are drawn are contained in a set

¹ The Survey of Earned Doctorates collects information on *research* doctorates only. This survey differs from the U.S. Department of Education’s collection of the number of doctorate degrees awarded per institution for all fields. For an evaluation of the differences, see National Science Foundation, 1993, *Science and Engineering Doctorates 1960-1991*, NSF 93-301, Detailed Statistical Tables, pp. 2-6, Washington, DC.

² See appendix C for information on response rates for the SED.

of tables following the main text. A reference at the bottom of each figure indicates the corresponding table number. Basic tables of statistics for 1998 research doctorate recipients are shown in appendix A, and trend tabulations for the previous ten-year period (1988 to 1998) are presented in appendix B. Appendix C provides technical notes, including response rates, and other information related to tables and figures in the report. Appendix D is the SED questionnaire for the 1998 academic year.